

develes that hym tormenten. Covered with the derknesse of deeth: that is to seyn, that he that is in helle shal have defaute of the sighte of God: for certes, the sighte of God is the lyf perdurable. The derknesse of deeth, been the synnes that the wretched man hath doon, whiche that destourben hym to see the face of God; right as dooth a derk clowde bitwixe us and the sonne. Lond of misere: bycause that ther been thre maneres of defautes, agayn thre thynges that folk of this world han in this present lyf; that is to seyn, honours, delices, and riches. Agayns honour, have they in helle shame and confusoun. for wel ye woot that men clepen honour the reverence that man doth to man; but in helle is noon honour ne reverence. for certes, namore reverence shal be doon there to a kyng than to a knave. for whiche God seith by the prophete Jeremie: Thilke folk that me despisen shul been in despit. Honour is eek cleped greet lordshipe; ther shal no wight serve oother but of harm & torment. Honour is eek cleped greet dignyte and heighnesse; but in helle shul they been al fortroden of develes. And God seith: The horrible develes shulle goon & comen upon the hevedes of the dampned folk. And this is forasmuche as, the hyer that they were in this present lyf, the moore shulle they been abated & defouled in helle. Agayns the riches of this world, shul they han myse of povert; and this povert shal been in foure thynges: in defaute of tresor, of which that David seith: The riche folk that embraceden and oneden al hire herte to tresor of this world, shul slepe in the slepyng of deeth; & nothyng ne shal they fynden in hir handes of al hire tresor. And moore over, the myse of helle shul been in defaute of mete and drinke. for God seith thus by Moyses: They shul been wasted with hunger, and the briddes of helle shul devouren hem with the bitter deeth, and the galle of the dragon shal been hire drynke, and the venym of the dragon hire morsels. And fortherover, hire myse shal been in defaute of clothyng; for they shulle be naked in body as of clothyng, save the fyr in which they brenne and othere filthes; and naked shul they been of soule, of alle manere vertues, which that is the clothyng of the soule. Where been thanne the gayer robes, & the softe shetes, and the smale shertes? Loo, what seith God of hem by the prophete Ysaye: that Under hem shul been strawed motthes, & hire covertures shulle been of wormes of helle. And fortherover, hir myse shal been in defaute of freendes; for he nys nat povre that hath goode freendes, but there

is no frend; for neither God ne no creature shal been frend to hem, and everich of hem shal haten oother with deedly hate. The sones and the doghtren shullen redden agayns fader and mooder, and kynspisen everich of hem oother, bothe day and nyght, as God seith by the prophete Michias. And the lovyng children, that whilom loveden so flesshly everich oother, wolden everich of hem eten oother if they mighte. for how sholden they love hem togidre in the peyne of helle, when they hated ech of hem oother in the prosperitee of this lyf? for truste wel, hir flesshly love was deedly hate; as seith the prophete David: Whoso that loveth wikkednesse he hateth his soule. And whoso hateth his owene soule, certes, he may love noon oother wight in no manere. And therefore in helle is no solas ne no frendshipe. but evere the moore flesshly kynredes that been in helle, the moore cursynges, the moore chidynges, and the moore deedly hate ther is among hem.

And fortherover they shul have defaute of alle manere delices: for certes, delices been after the appetites of the five wittes, as sighte, heryng, smellyng, savoryng, & touchyng. But in helle hir sighte shal be ful of derknesse and of smoke, and therefore ful of teeres; and hir heryng, ful of waymentyng and of gryntyng of teeth, as seith Jhesu Crist: hir nosethirles shullen be ful of stynkyng stynk. And as seith Ysaye the prophete: Hir savoryng shal be ful of bitter galle. And touchyng of al hir body, ycovered with fir that nevere shal quenche, and with wormes that nevere shul dym, as God seith by the mouth of Ysaye. And forasmuche as they shul nat wene that they may dym for peyne, and by hir deeth flee fro peyne, that may they understonden by the word of Job, that seith: Ther as is the shadwe of deeth. Certes, as shadwe hath the liknesse of the thyng of which it is shadwe, but shadwe is nat the same thyng of which it is shadwe. Right so fareth the peyne of helle; it is lyk deeth for the horrible angwyssh; and why? for it pyneth hem evere, as though they sholde dye anon; but certes, they shal nat dye. for as seith Seint Gregorie: To wrecche caytyves shal be deeth withoute deeth, & ende withouten ende, and defaute withoute failyng. for hir deeth shal alwey lyven, and hir ende shal everemo bigynne, and hir defaute shal nat faille. And therefore seith Seint John the Evangelist: They shullen folwe deeth, and they shul nat fynde hym; and they shul desiren to dye, and deeth shal flee fro hem.

And eek Job seith: that In helle is noon ordre of rule; & albeit so that God hath creat alle thynges in right ordre, and nothyng withouten ordre, but alle thynges been ordeyned and nombred; yet natheles, they that been dampned been nothyng in ordre, ne holden noon ordre; for the erthe ne shal bere hem no fruyt; for, as the prophete David seith: God shal destroe the fruyt of the erthe as fro hem; ne water ne shal yeve hem no moisture; ne the eyr no refresshyng, ne fyr no light. For as seith Seint Basile: The brennyng of the fyr of this world shal God yeven in helle to hem that been dampned; but the light and the cleernesse shal be yeven in hevne to his children; right as the goode man yeveth flessh to his children, and bones to his houndes. And for they shullen have noon hope to escape, seith Seint Job atte laste: that Ther shal honour & grisly drede dwellen withouten ende.

Horror is alwey drede of harm that is to come, and this drede shal evere dwelle in the hertes of hem that been dampned; and therefore han they lorn al hire hope for seven causes. First, for God that is hir juge shal be withouten mercy to hem; and they may nat plesse hym ne noon of his halwes; ne they ne may yeve nothyng for hire raunsoun; ne they have no voyz to speke to hym; ne they may nat fle fro peyne; ne they have no goodnesse in hem, that they moweshewe to deliver hem fro peyne. And therefore seith Salomon: The wikked man dyeth; and whan he is deed, he shal have noon hope to escape fro peyne. Whoso thanne wolde wel understande these peynes, and bithynke hym wel that he hath deserved thilke peynes for his synnes, certes, he sholde have moore talent to siken and to wepe, than for to synge & to pleye. For as that seith Salomon: Whoso that hadde the science to knowe the peynes that been establised and ordeyned for synne, he wolde make sorwe. Thilke science, as seith Seint Augustyn, maketh a man to waymenten in his herte.

The fourthe point, that oghte maken a man to have contricioun, is the sorweful remembrance of the good that he hath left to doon heere in erthe; & eek the good that he hath lorn. Soothly, the goode werkes that he hath left, outhen they been the goode werkes that he hath wrought er he fel into deedly synne, or elles the goode werkes that he wrought while he lay in synne. Soothly, the goode werkes that he dide biforn that he fil in synne, been al mortified and astoned and dilled by the ofte synnyng. The othere goode

werkes that he wrought while he lay in deedly synne, thei been outrely dede as to the lyf perdurable in hevne. Thanne thilke goode werkes that been mortified by ofte synnyng, whiche goode werkes he dide while he was in charitee, ne mowen evere quyken agayn withouten verray penitence. And therof seith God, by the mouth of Ezechiel: that, If the rightful man returne agayn from his rightwisesse and werke wikkednesse, shal he lyve? Nay; for alle the goode werkes that he hath wrought ne shul nevere been in remembrance; for he shal dym in his synne. And upon thilke chapitre seith Seint Gregorie thus: That we shulle understonde this principally; that whan we doon deedly synne, it is for nocht thanne to rehernen or drawn into memorie the goode werkes that we han wrought biforn. For certes, in the werkynge of the deedly synne, ther is no trust to no good werk that we han doon biforn; that is to seyn, as for to have therby the lyf perdurable in hevne. But natheles, the goode werkes quyken agayn, and comen agayn, and helpen, & availen to have the lyf perdurable in hevne, whan we han contricioun. But soothly, the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in deedly synne, forasmuche as they were doon in deedly synne, they may nevere quyken agayn. for certes, thyng that nevere hadde lyf may nevere quyken; and natheles, albeit that they ne availen nocht to han the lyf perdurable, yet availen they to abregge of the peyne of helle, or elles to geten temporal riches, or elles that God wole therather enlumyne and lightne the herte of the synful man to have repentaunce. And eek they availen for to usen a man to doon goode werkes, that the feend have the lasse power of his soule. And thus the curteis Lord Jhesu Crist wole that no good werk belost; for in somewhat it shal availle. But, forasmuche as the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in good lyf, been al mortified by synne folwyng; and eek, sith that alle the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in deedly synne, been outrely dede as for to have the lyf perdurable; wel may that man, that no good werk ne dooth, synge thilke newe frenshe song: Jay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour.

For certes, synne bireveth a man bothe goodnesse of nature and eek the goodnesse of grace. for soothly, the grace of the hooly Goost fareth lyk fyr, that may nat been ydel; for fyr fayleth anon as it forleteth his werkynge, & right so grace fayleth anon as it forleteth his werkynge. Then leseth the synful man the goodnesse of glorie, that oonly is bihight to goode men that labouren and werken.